

Frequently Asked Questions New Runway 10C/28C at Chicago O'Hare International Airport

Runway Usage:

Q1: When will the new runway open?

A1. The City of Chicago (City) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) expect to commission the new runway on October 17, 2013. The new runway is 10,800 feet long, 200 feet wide, and is called Runway 10C/28C (10 Center / 28 Center).

Q2: Why is O'Hare building a new runway?

A2. In 2001 the City announced a major initiative to modernize the airfield at O'Hare International Airport (O'Hare). The Purpose and Need included in the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is: to address the project needs of the Chicago region by reducing delays at O'Hare, and thereby enhancing the capacity of the National Airspace System; and ensure that the existing and future terminal facilities and supporting infrastructure can efficiently accommodate airport users. The O'Hare airfield re-orientation requires realignment of three runways, the construction of one new runway, and numerous enabling projects. The City of Chicago's O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP) is a multi-year construction program that is anticipated to conclude by 2020 (Build-Out). For more information on the OMP, please visit the OMP website on the Internet at <http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/doa/provdrs/omp.html>.

Runway 10C/28C is the final runway component of O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP) Phase 1. It will be the first new runway commissioned at the airport since November 2008.

Q3. Was the OMP analyzed for environmental impacts?

A3. Yes. The FAA analyzed the OMP's and the Master Plan Projects' potential environmental impacts for approximately three years, from 2002 to 2005. Public scoping meetings for the FAA EIS were held on August 21-22, 2002. An information meeting was held on August 29, 2002, specifically for the mayors of municipalities surrounding O'Hare. In March 2003, the FAA conducted a public meeting introducing the preliminary purpose and need statement for the EIS. In October 2003, the FAA conducted a working session with invited members of local government to discuss the alternatives for consideration during the EIS process. In order to inform the public of the development of the EIS, the FAA made public on its website the environmental modeling data and other documentation related to the EIS.

The FAA issued the Draft EIS in January 2005, public meetings on the Draft EIS were held on February 22-24, 2005, and the Final EIS was issued in July 2005. On September 30, 2005, the FAA issued the Record of Decision (ROD) for O'Hare Modernization. Information on the FAA's analysis of the OMP and Master Plan Projects can be found on the Internet at: http://www.faa.gov/airports/airport_development/omp/.

In addition, the FAA gave briefings on the development of the EIS for OMP to the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC) at ONCC meetings on February 7, 2003, June 4, 2004, January 25, 2005, and June 3, 2005.

Q4. Where is the new runway located on the airfield, and in relation to O'Hare's surroundings?

A4. On the south airfield, approximately 1,200 feet south of existing Runway 10L/28R (as measured from centerline to centerline).

Q5. How will the new runway be utilized?

A5. Mostly as an arrival runway in the majority of weather and wind conditions.

Q6. How will new Runway 10C/28C affect the airspace around O'Hare?

A6. Activation of Runway 10C/28C will result in airspace changes that will alter how the airfield is used. The flow of planes in and out of O'Hare will change to a predominant East-West flow. In general over the course of a year, the majority of the time (about 70 percent) O'Hare will be in a West Flow air traffic pattern, with aircraft arriving from the east and departing to the west. In East Flow, aircraft will arrive from the west and depart to the east, and this is forecasted to occur about 30 percent of the time.

Q7: How many flights will arrive on Runway 10C/28C?

A7. As the airport operator, the City determines which runways are open and available for use by the airlines and the air traffic controllers. The FAA utilizes these runways based on airfield, air traffic, and weather conditions, all of which cause the number of aircraft utilizing individual runways to vary every day. The FAA's EIS assumed that in Build-Out conditions, currently estimated to occur in 2020, the average annual daytime and nighttime percentage of arrivals from the east for Runway 10C/28C would be 23.5 percent and 5.3 percent, respectively. The average annual daytime and nighttime percentage of arrivals from the west from Runway 10C/28C would be 8.9 percent and 1.3 percent, respectively. These are average percentages, and it was assumed that some days would experience more or less arrivals, due to prevailing winds, aircraft demand, and weather conditions.

The FAA's forecast used in the EIS assumed that operational levels at O'Hare would be higher than what are currently being experienced. Due to the decrease in actual operation levels from original projections, the number of arrivals expected to occur on Runway 10C/28C are anticipated to be less than what was assumed in the EIS.

Q8: When will this runway be used?

A8. The runway will be used for simultaneous triple parallel approaches during all weather conditions during the daytime. The new runway will also be used at night.

Q9: What aircraft types will use Runway 10C/28C?

A9. Runway 10C/28C will be an Aircraft Design Group VI runway. It will be able to accommodate all aircraft that fly today, including the B747-8 and A380.

Q10. Will the opening of the new runway only change the impact of aircraft noise for the communities that lie along its flight paths?

A10. The opening of Runway 10C/28C will alter the impact of aircraft noise on all of the communities that surround O'Hare, not just those along its flight paths. Activation of Runway 10C/28C in conjunction with airspace changes will alter how the airfield is used. The flow of aircraft in and out of O'Hare will change to a predominant East-West flow. Runway usage as it exists currently (prior to October 17, 2013), will change, including:

- Arrivals on Runways 14L, 14R and 22R will occur less frequently.
- Arrivals on Runway 9L will occur more frequently.
- Runway 10L/28R will be used primarily as a departure runway when Runway 10C/28C is being used as an arrival runway.
- Runways 32L, 22L and 4L will still be used as primary departure runways.

Q11. Where can I find more specific information on the changes to runway usage and noise contours at O'Hare when the new runway opens?

A11. With the addition of East Flow and West Flow runway patterns, noise contours around O'Hare will change as forecasted in the 2005 Final EIS for the OMP. For the noise contour map as forecasted in the Final EIS with today's runways in place, see Exhibit 5.1-4. For the noise contour map as forecasted in the Final EIS with the addition of new Runway 10C/28C, see Exhibit 5.1-7. For the noise contour map as forecasted in the Final EIS with the build-out airport, see Exhibit 5.1-10. To see all of these Final EIS graphics, please visit the FAA's Final EIS webpage on the Internet at: http://www.faa.gov/airports/airport_development/omp/eis/feis/.

Nighttime Flights:

Q12. What is the Fly Quiet Program and how does it affect nighttime flights?

A12. On June 17, 1997, the City, in cooperation with the ONCC, the user airlines, and the FAA, implemented the Fly Quiet Program at O'Hare. The program consists of a series of voluntary noise abatement flight and operating procedures designed to reduce the impact of aircraft noise during the nighttime hours from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. The three main elements of the Fly Quiet Program are: 1.) preferential runway use; 2.) arrival and departure flight procedures; and 3.) aircraft engine ground run-up procedures. For details on the current Fly Quiet Program, including the Fly Quiet Program manual and quarterly reports, please visit the City's website at: <http://www.flychicago.com/OHare/EN/AboutUs/Community/NoiseManagement/FlyQuiet/Pages/Fly-Quiet-Program.aspx>.

As stated in the 2005 Record of Decision for the O'Hare Modernization, "At this point it is not reasonable to either assume that there would be a new Fly Quiet Program or speculate what a new Fly Quiet Program would be. FAA will, however, give consideration to suggestions for changes in the Fly Quiet Program developed by the ONCC and requested of the FAA by the City of Chicago. It is FAA's understanding that it is the City of Chicago's intent to continue the existing Fly Quiet Program, except as affected by runway decommissioning. The Fly Quiet Program will be modified by ONCC in the future only if needed; such modification would be done in consultation with the FAA and the City of Chicago Department of Aviation. Modification requiring FAA action would be subsequent to its prior approval, and any necessary environmental review."

Aircraft Noise and Noise Monitoring:

Q13: If I live north or south of the new runway, why am I hearing aircraft noise?

A13. There are many variables that would increase the noise levels around your home, depending on the aircraft fleet mix, your home's proximity to the new runway's flight path, weather, altitude, and other factors. A typical noise "footprint" for any individual aircraft utilizing O'Hare airfield covers an area on the ground between 2 and 49 square miles, depending on the specific aircraft.

Q14. What is a noise contour?

A14. Noise contours depict levels of aircraft noise surrounding an airport. The FAA analyzed noise impacts for the OMP in the EIS using established aviation industry methods. The noise contour developed for the OMP for build-out conditions (i.e., when all of the OMP runways are complete) is called the Build-Out Noise Contour. This noise contour is used for land use compatibility and noise exposure and mitigation purposes. The Build-Out Noise Contour was approved on September 30, 2005, as part of the ROD.

Q15. What is the 65 DNL?

A15. As FAA's primary metric for aviation noise analysis, the FAA has determined that the cumulative noise energy exposure of individuals to noise resulting from aviation activities must be established in terms of the day-night average sound level (DNL) in decibels (dB). The 65 DNL is used to determine land use compatibility guidelines (i.e., for residential and school sound insulation). A significant noise impact occurs if analysis shows that a proposed action will cause noise sensitive areas to experience an increase in noise of DNL 1.5 dB or more at or above 65 DNL when compared to the impacts of not doing the project at the same point in time.

Q16: Is there a permanent noise monitor located to capture noise events?

A16. Since 1996 the City has utilized the Airport Noise Management System (ANMS) to monitor the amount of noise being generated over the communities surrounding O'Hare by the aircraft operating at the airport. The ANMS collects, analyzes, and processes data from a number of sources of information including a network of 32 noise monitors near O'Hare, FAA radar data, weather data, and telephone calls to the City's noise hotline. On average, over 150,000 flights and 400,000 noise events are recorded by the ANMS each month for the Chicago Airport System. To review the latest monthly noise reports, please visit the City's website on the Internet at: <http://www.flychicago.com/OHare/EN/AboutUs/Community/NoiseManagement/Pages/Aircraft-Noise-Management-System-Reports.aspx>.

Sound Insulation:

Q17: Does my home qualify for sound insulation?

A17. When the FAA issued the ROD, the ROD identified the 65 DNL Build-Out Noise Contour as the noise contour to be used for sound insulation purposes. Noise contours for interim conditions are not used for sound insulation purposes. Each home must also meet additional eligibility criteria as established by the City and the ONCC.

For more information, please call the City's Residential Inquiry Line at 773.894.3255 or visit the Property Locator on the City's website at <https://gisapps.cityofchicago.org/aviation/>.

Q18: Will the eligibility criteria for the Residential Sound Insulation Program (RSIP) ever change?

A18. When the OMP is complete, currently estimated to be in 2020, the FAA has directed the City to prepare a new noise contour reflecting the aircraft noise impacts surrounding O'Hare for the fifth year after Build-Out. If the new noise contour includes any additional homes inside the 65 DNL, these homes will become eligible for sound insulation. The City will contact those homeowners at that time.

Q19: Is there anything I can do on my own to alleviate the noise in my home?

A19. The City believes that noise management is an important issue for the communities surrounding O'Hare and works on aircraft noise management issues daily. As a result, the City prepared a "Sound Insulating Your Home" booklet to outline some available options that you can implement in your home to decrease the effects of aircraft noise. This booklet is available for homeowners surrounding the airport who are not eligible to participate in the RSIP. To download a copy of the booklet, please visit the City's website on the Internet at:

<http://www.flychicago.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/OHare/AboutUs/Residential%20SIP/ORD%20Sound%20Insulation%20Handbook.pdf>.

Information Resources/Noise Complaints:

City's Residential Inquiry Line: 773.894.3255

City's Noise Complaint Hotline: 1.800.435.9569 (rolls over to Chicago 311)

FAA's Great Lakes Regional Noise Line: 847.294.7373

City's Chicago Department of Aviation website: www.flychicago.com

City's Residential Property Locator: <https://gisapps.cityofchicago.org/aviation/>

City's O'Hare Modernization Program website:

<http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/doa/provdrs/omp.html>

O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission website: www.oharenoise.org

FAA's O'Hare Modernization website: www.faa.gov/airports/airtraffic/airport_development/omp